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JOHN A. SEAVERNS

*ADVICE ON
FOX-HUNTING*



Henry, XVIIIth Baron
Willoughby de Broke

ADVICE ON FOX-HUNTING

BY

HENRY XVIII BARON
WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE

WITH PREFACE BY HIS SON
RICHARD GREVILLE

JOHN AND EDWARD BUMPUS LTD.
350 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

1906

PREFACE

IN response to a suggestion that some of my father's writings upon Fox-hunting should be collected and published in a separate volume, I have chosen the three papers contained in this book.

His claim to be heard rests upon accomplishments still fresh in the annals of the chase ; it may, however, be of interest to recall that he became Master of the Warwickshire Hounds in 1876, availing himself of the services of a professional huntsman until 1881, when he commenced to carry the horn himself, and continued to do so till ill health caused his retirement in the autumn of 1898.

WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE.

KINETON, WARWICK.

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I

TO MASTERS OF HOUNDS

Advice on Fox-Hunting

I. TO MASTERS OF HOUNDS

THE first thing to be done on taking a country is to get the land and covert owners on your side. Write to all of them asking leave to draw their coverts, and express a hope that they will extend the same kindness in the preservation of foxes to you as they have always done to your predecessors.

I would advise as much compliance with the wishes of game preservers as is con-

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sistent with hunting the country fairly. But there is one thing I could never find it in my heart to do, which is, to stop the hounds when running hard for a game-preserved's covert. If you are Master of a pack which belongs to the country, I say you have no right to spoil the hounds belonging to the county gentlemen by disappointing them in this way. No; by all means steer clear of the shooting-parties, and meet the shooter's wishes as much as you can, but by no means, and for no man, stop your hounds when running.

I should never advise anyone to take a country in which there is an old-established huntsman, a favourite with everyone, and one whom it would be something like high

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treason on your part to dismiss. He will be master, not you. You will simply be a paying machine to settle all the bills and mount him, and he will constantly be grumbling about his horses, and perhaps will even give vent to his feelings in his speech at your puppy-show luncheon. Far the best plan is to start fresh with your own man, keeping perhaps one of the old staff to show the rest the way about at first. Choose a man of fair experience, and above all do not listen to the accounts of hunt-servants' riding, and be led into taking on one of the boys who get huntsmen's places in these modern days. The majority of hunting-men seem to think that, if a man or a boy will only jump big places, he must be a good

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huntsman, and boys get pitchforked into good places as huntsmen before they know how to whip-in or even to behave. When I began hunting, whippers-in did not look to be huntsmen before they were well past thirty. Nowadays it is no uncommon thing to find the huntsman the youngest of the three servants. I do not mean to say that a huntsman should not ride; of course, he should ride up to his hounds and see how far they have carried the scent, but everyone can ride if he only gets a horse good enough; the difficulty is to get a man who knows when to ride, and will do so only to get to his hounds, and not to win the approbation of an ignorant field. But always mount your men well, if only for economy's

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sake; they will take care of good horses, but will not do so of bad ones.

Be careful how you breed your hounds. In forming a pack you will have to be dependent, in a great measure, on sires from other packs. But do not be tempted to run after a hound because he has won at Peterborough, or is very good-looking, or is even said to be very good in his work, if he comes of a strain that you do not like, or if his pedigree contains a lot of soft blood, or if his ancestors come from a kennel that you cannot trust. A chance-bred foxhound is like a chance-bred racehorse: he may be very good at his work, but he is worthless for breeding. Not being carefully bred himself, the faults of his progenitors are certain to

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be reproduced in his offspring. There is a good deal of nonsense talked about looks in these days, but, depend on it, the best working hounds in a pack are never the worst-looking, though, of course, a real beauty, a Peterborough winner, may turn out useless in the field. This is a good lesson. Turn up his pedigree, and you will find where the mistake in his breeding has been made. Never breed from a hound in his first season. He may develop all manner of faults, and you cannot breed a fault out: you must stamp it out. Some people think that if you breed from a noisy bitch and a mute dog, or vice versa, you will have hit the just medium in tongue. Far from it. In all probability half the litter will turn out

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mute, the other half noisy. Of course, neither hound ought to have been kept, much less bred from. Always draft a mute hound. There is no fault so bad, and the better he is in his work the more harm he will do. Then there is straightness. Everybody in his heart of hearts likes his hounds straight. In my experience it is only those who cannot breed straight hounds who prefer crooked ones; some even go so far as to say that a straight hound cannot be good in his work! But I always notice that, when hound breeders of this sort happen to breed a straight hound, they are as proud of him as a hen is of one chick. Of course, you must have plenty of good walks to breed a good pack of hounds, so that you

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can mercilessly afford to draft mute, noisy, skirting, or lame hounds, without getting your pack too short. A puppy show and a luncheon after it are good things; but do not have your huntsman's health proposed. Indulgence in post-prandial rhetoric save by the experienced is apt to be dangerous. If you, or your huntsman, or both of you, are new to the country, I should say certainly go cub-hunting yourself every morning, so as to learn the locality yourself, or show it to your huntsman, as the case may be. And let cub-hunting be cub-hunting; keep your hounds on the dark as much as possible, and never try to have a run across the open. No man can ride to the hounds, in the Midlands at anyrate, while

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the leaf is on the hedges, consequently fences get pulled about, gaps are made, the farmers' stock, especially the grass bullocks, injured, and altogether much more damage done by a few horsemen than is done by many in regular hunting. In dry, hard weather the hounds' feet get injured, and in any weather at all they run a risk of being spoilt. They check: no one is with them, off go some of the entry after a hare, taking most likely a few of the one- and two-seasoned hunters with them, and in about half-an-hour all the trouble you have taken in breaking during the summer and autumn is lost. Sport for the field cannot be said to begin till November 1, but it is in the two or three months prior to this that a

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pack of hounds is made or marred, and these months must be given up to the Master and Huntsman to make the pack. I am fairly astonished to see that some establishments have actually taken to advertising their cub-hunting fixtures. This is the height of folly. There is no greater nuisance than a parcel of men, women, and grooms, the two former most likely smoking, all of them out on fresh horses, and talking in the rides of a covert. The Hunt servants cannot get about to do their work, and the hounds get kicked. Never commit "the fatal mistake" of not beginning cub-hunting as soon as the corn is cut ; and never take fright, and leave off, because the ground gets hard. To do this is ruination to your entry and to the one- and

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two-seasoned hunters, who will begin forty times wilder than the young ones. Breed your hounds with good legs and feet, and they will not take much harm, and if you do screw up a few old cub-hunting horses, what matter?

In breeding your hounds make up your mind what sort you like and stick to that sort. If you like Welsh hounds (of which I have little knowledge) breed Welsh hounds and have a Welsh pack; but if you prefer English hounds, try to breed them as good-looking as possible. In the Midlands I am quite certain that the best sort to aim at are the best-looking. I do not mean the largest-boned animals—they do not have to carry weight—nor do I

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insist on great spring of the ribs. There is a medium in all things, and ribs and bone must be kept up to a certain extent, or your hounds will look shallow, and, as Mr Bragg said, “only fit to hunt a cat in a kitchen.” But I will never believe that a hound tires because he is light of bone; my experience has been all the other way, against “that useless appendage,” as Lord Henry Bentinck called bone. In my opinion, the thing that makes a hound stoop to the scent easily is a good neck and shoulders, so that the hound is running at his ease and within himself all the time. I would never sacrifice necks and shoulders to bone, straightness, or ribs. But I hear someone say “Nose.” Well, I suppose there are

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hounds more tender-nosed than others, and if these are found out they should, of course, be bred from. But I am not quite sure that dash, intelligence, and perseverance do not ensure what is called a good nose. A hound may have ever such a sensitive organ of smell, but he is no use if he is shy, idle, or slack. Any hound will run hard on a real good-scenting day, but give me one who will try for you on a bad-scenting day; who will jump a gate when casting himself, and will jump it back again if he does not hit the line off; in short, one who is miserable if he is off the line, and does not go and contentedly lie down and lap in a pond. I have often been quite sorry for good hounds who have worked so

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hard to no purpose on a bad-scenting day. But these are the boys to keep and breed from; if one could get a whole pack of them, very few foxes would get away.

I think the best size for hounds is $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches for dogs, and rather lower, but not much, for bitches. In a grass country no hound, however big, can jump a stake-and-bound fence with a ditch to him, to say nothing of bullfinches, and small hounds do get through these fences quicker and with less tailing than big ones. In a wall or bank country I do not suppose it matters so much, though I doubt whether big hounds are able to jump better than small ones. Foxes must be hustled to be killed. Mr Jorrocks says: "Full well he knows, to

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kill their fox they must have nose," but also he knows "that to kill their fox they must press him at some period or other of the chase."

There is great difference in foxes. Some come to hand easily, but there are some that will beat any pack of hounds, unless at some time or other in the run they are hard pressed for half-an-hour at least; indeed, there are some foxes who seem, over grass, in dryish weather, to be able to keep going nearly all day. It is certainly not bone which enables hounds to catch foxes of this sort. They must have good necks and shoulders, and they must be in tiptop condition. That is how the foxes are killed, by care and careful conditioning in the

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kennel, and by being in good heart and confidence, with plenty of blood.

Lastly, unless you are genuinely fond of hounds and hound breeding, do not have anything to do with their Mastership. The blanks in an M.F.H.'s career are many compared with the prizes. A good day and a kill in the open is a splendid thing. Everyone is pleased ; the ride home seems short, and the port tastes well in the evening ; but continuous bad luck, bad scent, and everyone taking a pleasure in telling you how well the neighbouring Hunts are doing is hard to bear. Still, it is a consolation when you get back among your hounds, which you have carefully bred yourself, to know for certain that the temporary loss

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of sport is not their fault, that they will do all they can for you, and that your turn must come again.

Buy your forage, and as many of your hunters as you can, from the farmers in the Hunt, and never use moss litter or any other substitute for straw.

II

TO HUNTSMEN

II. TO HUNTSMEN

STAY at home and look after your hounds.
Remember Garge Riddel :

“ Let fools go travel far and nigh,
We bides at home, my dog and I.”

So stay at home and look after your dogs
summer and winter, and do not go gadding
about all the puppy shows in the kingdom.
At your own puppy show, if your master
is foolish enough to allow your health to
be drunk, simply acknowledge the compli-
ment, and do not follow the present prac-
tice of huntsmen in making what you

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doubtless think is a clever and facetious speech.

When the hunting season is over, and your young hounds will go pretty quietly without couples, get on the hacks and have the old hounds also out. I do not mean to fast exercise, but long walking exercise, keeping under the trees and in the shade as much as possible. Anything is better for hounds than lying all day on the hot flags. Give some boiled vegetables in the old hounds' food this time of year. Young nettles gathered before they get tough and stingy are as good as anything. The young hounds will do very well on navy ship biscuits soaked and mixed with some good broth.

TO HUNTSMEN

Towards the latter part of July, say about the time of the Peterborough Shows, you will begin to trot the old and young hounds along, and will find as many hares, deer, etc., as you can. Keep your hounds moving right up to cub-hunting, and have them on the light side to begin with, or if the weather is hot they will tire before the foxes, get disgusted, do themselves no end of harm, and will very likely leave the foxes instead of breaking them up properly. It is a grand thing for hounds if you can show them some riot just before throwing them into a covert where you are sure to find a litter of cubs. Allow plenty of time to get to the meet; five to six miles an hour is quite fast enough, but when cub-

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hunting you can travel a bit faster than in regular hunting. In cub-hunting always let the hounds find their own fox, and do not have him hallooed over a ride at first. Do not have him headed back, or held up till he is beat, and then do so for fear of changing. The more foxes you kill cub-hunting after good work for hounds, the steadier and keener your pack will be, but do not go and surround small places and pick up two or three foxes at once. This does not benefit the hounds more than killing one, and in a good country is wanton waste. Always dig your fox cub-hunting if he goes to ground in a practicable place. In regular hunting it is better to go and find another than to keep the field starving

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in the cold ; but always remember that you cannot have steady hounds without plenty of blood, and that in a country where foxes are numerous, if the pack are riotous it is always the fault of the huntsman. So begin November with your hounds “blooded up to the eyes,” as Lord Henry Bentinck wrote. Never mind what people say about letting foxes have a chance and letting them go. In a small covert let the best foxes who break covert first go, and stay and kill the worst one, but never be tempted by what anybody says to try and have a run in the open.

It is all very well for those who come out. Their horses are fresh, as they have been standing about, while you and your

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whippers-in have been working yours hard. They can jump or not as they like, and if they lose the hounds they can go back to breakfast, while you and the whippers-in must stick to the hounds at all costs. Besides, the young hounds do not understand it at first, and simply follow the old ones, and do themselves no end of harm by getting lost, stopping in ponds, etc.

Always remember you are the servant of your master, not of the field, and his orders should always be not to get away in the open in the cub-hunting season.

In regular hunting the whole system is reversed. Then you try and get away with the first fox that leaves, presumably the best one. If you cannot get all the hounds,

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and at all events enough to go on with, because the pack are running another, do not stand blowing, still less move a field or two away and blow, but gallop back as quickly as possible, get up wind of your hounds, and blow them away. If by good luck they happen to throw up for a moment, out they will come to your horn, and you can lay both ends on the line together. Unless the fox goes straight away up wind, it is almost always better to blow your hounds out at a place where the fox has not gone, and lay them on all together. Always have one way of blowing when the fox is away—one that neither the field nor the hounds can mistake—and unless the latter are running very hard, you will see how they will come

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tumbling out to it. All hounds hate struggling in thick covert, and are more or less anxious to get away. But never be tempted to use this note for any other purpose. If you do, its charm is gone. You cannot, to quote Lord Henry Bentinck again, lie to your hounds with impunity. Indeed, in hunting a fox in the open you should hardly use your horn at all. I am no advocate for much horn ; as Mr Vyner says, in season it is like a word : “ How good it is ” ; but when it is blown I like it to give forth no uncertain sound, that everyone may know what is meant by it, hounds and all. If you are always blowing your horn, whether you want hounds or not, you might as well be playing the concertina for all they will care for it.

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When you come to the first check it is almost a certainty that the fox has turned right or left. Of course, if a good one, he may turn again and make his original point, so do not sit still. Try and keep the field off the hounds, and encourage them to try, up wind at first if possible: the fox has most likely turned down wind, but the hounds will almost swing their own cast unaided up wind; and if the fox has turned in this direction and they hit him off, he is yours; nothing but an open drain can save him. Meanwhile, cast your eye well forward and down wind, and see if you can see the fox or anything suggestive, such as a man running, sheep running, or having run together, to show where he is gone.

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When the pack have finished their cast, then, and not till then, go to them: do not stand and blow; whisper a word of encouragement in their ears, and cast them, on the best scenting ground you can see, in a body in front of you. You will be able to keep the field off their backs much better in this way than if you started off jumping with the pack at your horse's tail and all the hard-riding fools of the field mixed up with them. If the assisted up-wind cast and the down-wind cast both end in silence, it looks bad; but always remember that if your down-wind cast is a wide one the fox may have gone to ground short of it, or you may have cast over his line owing to a bit of bad scenting. All you

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can do then is to use your discretion. I remember a season or two ago, after having come a considerable way, the hounds threw up among a perfect sea of greasy wheat-fields, in which there seemed to be positively no scent at all. The orthodox casts having produced no result, I noticed there was one grass field about a mile and a half ahead—an oasis in the desert. I thought: “Well, the fox is lost anyhow, but if by good luck he has crossed that field, the hounds will show a line.” I cantered on, and they did show a line, with the result that we were able to keep on after the fox and eventually kill him in a neighbouring country.

When you come to a covert let your

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hounds hunt the line through it. I do not like the plan of having them whipped off the line and casting beyond it. Never take the hounds off their noses if you can help it. Similarly, when your fox is beat, and you see him before hounds, hold your tongue, and by no means take them off their noses unless you are perfectly certain you can give them a view. If the fox pops through a hedge and they do not see him, you will have lost a lot of time, as the hounds will not hunt for a few minutes, but will stand staring about, expecting to see the fox. The only time it is allowable to lift them after a beaten fox is when they are running for a head of open earth or a covert full of fresh foxes. But never,

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under any circumstances, go and ride the fox, leaving your hounds. I have seen many huntsmen do this, but I never yet saw one catch a fox by himself, though I have seen some very nearly do it.

Your fox is dead and the day over. Travel home quietly, and do not have the hounds hurried. Stop somewhere if the day has been very hard, and give your horses some chilled water or gruel if you can get it; but do not stop long, and never go inside a house, no matter whose it is. When you get home feed your hounds yourself, with judgment. The man who hunts the hounds should always feed them; not because feeding them makes them any fonder of you, but because the huntsman

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knows, or ought to know, how much each hound requires. Never let them eat to repletion; if you do, what is the result? In every pack there are some slow, shy feeders: while these are playing with their food the greedy ones are fairly gorging themselves. The next day's hunting will find the light feeders some two or three fields ahead of the gorgers, to the detriment of the looks and sport of the pack. Years ago hounds were always washed after hunting. I do not think this a good plan—they will soon clean themselves in the straw; but if it is pouring with rain when you return to kennel, so that whatever you do you can make the hounds no wetter, I can see no harm in throwing

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some nice warm broth over them, and it certainly makes them look well the next day. Always have two lodging-rooms for your hunting pack: put them in one directly after feeding, and shift them into another for the rest of the night in about an hour and a half's time. This will prevent a lot of kennel lameness, which is really rheumatism.

In breeding I see no reason why pregnant bitches should not run with the pack if you are at all short: of course, they must be stopped in good time. They should then be turned out of the kennel and given their liberty all day. I know this causes some complaint if the kennels are near a village, as these old ladies are sad

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thieves; but having kennels near a village is such a manifest advantage to the latter that complaint really ought not to be made. Five puppies are quite enough for any mother to bring up. After the middle of May four is plenty. Do all you can to induce farmers and others to walk puppies; without good walks every pack must deteriorate. Show an interest in your puppies by looking them up at summer exercise. When they come in from quarters, and distemper and yellows break out, you will have your hands full, and must not mind having to get up in the night and attend to the sick ones. There are all sorts of recipes, homœopathic as well as allopathic, but the best medicines are warmth, care,

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and attention. It is not sufficient to drop the food down before the puppy; you must stay and see that he eats it. Yellows is a much more dangerous disease than distemper, and coming with it, as it often does, is almost always fatal. Calomel in some form or other seems to be the only remedy, and that a very uncertain one. Never let the old and young hounds lodge or feed together till cub-hunting. If rabies breaks out, it almost always comes from some hound having been bitten at quarters. If you have once had rabies in your kennel you will never forget it.

Ride your horses fairly, and do not try and gain the praise of ignorant onlookers by jumping unnecessary fences; and do

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not be always quarrelling with your horse and jagging at his mouth—the best riders are those who are on good terms with their horses. Do not grumble; do not quarrel with the stud groom. Remember you are one of the luckiest men in the world, paid for doing what is or what ought to be your greatest pleasure. Do not be down-hearted if you get into a run of bad luck and are tempted to think you will never catch a fox again, and when you hear things said which would try the patience of Job. Luck will change, and you will begin to think you can never lose a fox again. Talk to your hounds and make much of them; never speak angrily or uncivilly to them. Whatever you do, al-

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ways try and get them to think they are doing it all themselves. If you have to stop them at dark, or off a vixen, try and do it when they come to a check; but if you are obliged to stop them roughly, get off your horse and make friends with them again. Show them they have done no wrong by persevering on. Always ask to have the mute hounds, skirters, and noisy ones drafted at once. They are faults that always get worse, and as Jorrocks says, a skirting hound, like a skirting rider, is sure to have a lot of followers. I do not call a hound a skirter that cuts corners going to the cry. This is what every good hound ought to do.

Be kind to your whippers-in; do not try

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and slip them. When you turn back drawing a covert always let them know by a good loud “Yooi over, try back!” They will work all the better for you if you help them in their little ways. When you have made up your mind to go to a holloa, take your hounds off their noses and travel along. Do not, if you can help it, let them hunt again till you have found out from the man who holloaed exactly which way the fox really went. He very likely turned him, and the hounds may take it heel way: it is poor consolation to be told by a grinning rustic, after the hounds have settled with a good cry, “They be a running back scent.” It is easier to strike the line heel way than people think. Casting you may get on the

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heel line of another fox which has left the covert since you did. I have often been laughed at for doing it and told to trust my hounds; but even if they are running hard, and I come across a man who has seen the fox, I do not think a few seconds are thrown away in finding out which way the fox's head was. As my father used to say, take every advantage you can of your fox. He will take every one he possibly can of you.

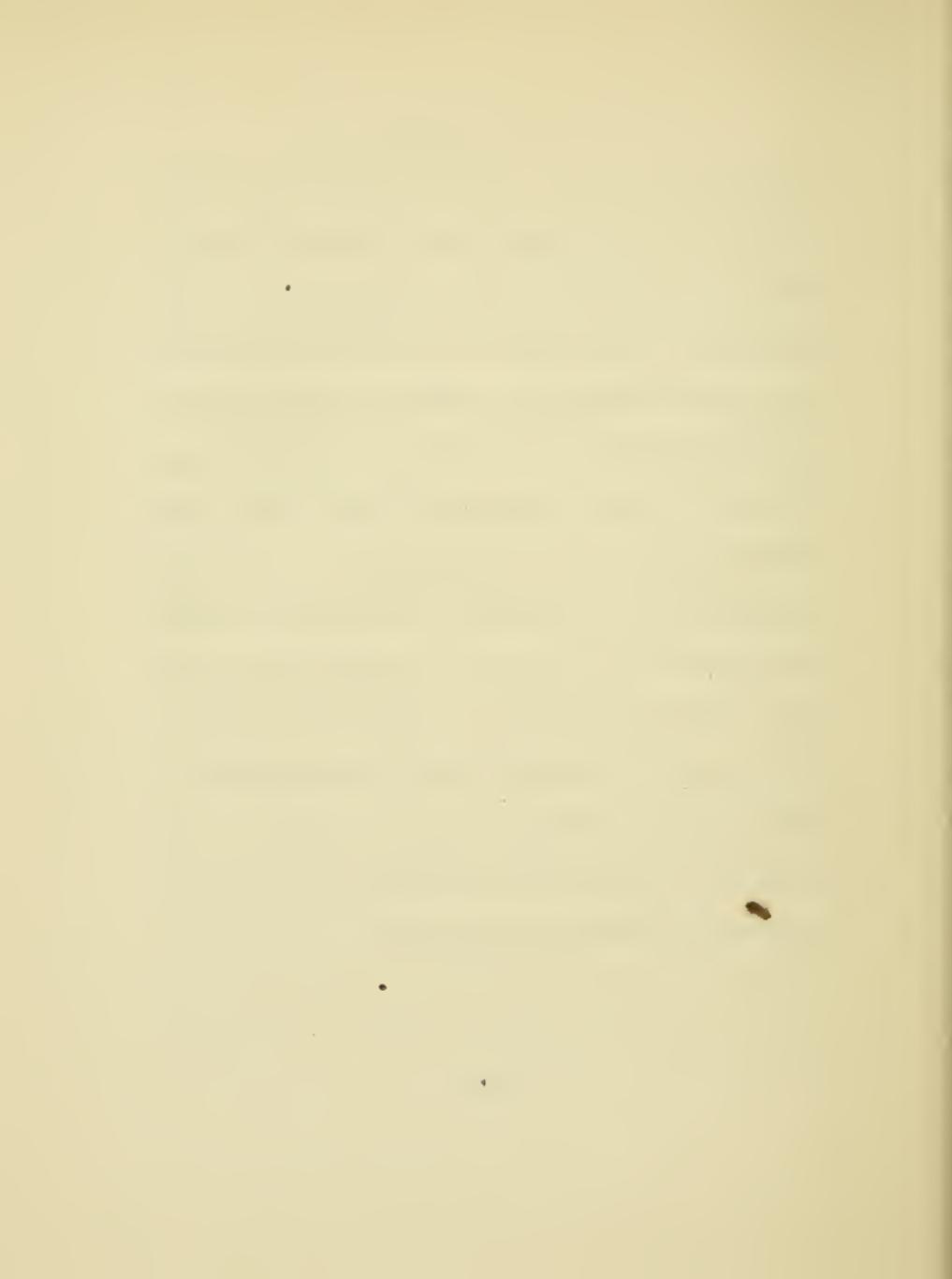
Look out along a road. It is a curious thing, but hounds hardly ever turn out of one exactly where the fox has gone. They either go too far or more commonly not far enough. If you can manage to get half the pack in the road and the other half in two

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lots on each of it, you are in a capital position ; and when those in the road throw up you can press on without fear of over-running the scent. Do not hurry the hounds in a road, and beware how you encourage one that is always making a hit under these circumstances. If you make too much of him you will turn him into a rogue. Always acknowledge to your master when you have lost the fox, and do not go dragging on, and slip the hounds into a covert and count the fresh fox you find as the one you have been hunting. Your master may wish the covert drawn in a different way. Be cheery in drawing woods ; make plenty of noise, so that the hounds may know where you are. If they are very

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fond of you, they will be listening about for you if you go on the silent system. Hounds that habitually hang back in covert should be drafted, but after you have drawn one blank you will only make these offenders worse by standing and blowing. Move on, and they will catch you up. Once more, but it cannot be too often repeated, never interfere with your hounds at checks till they have made their own casts first. To quote Lord Henry Bentinck once more, hounds that are repeatedly messed about and cast will in a short time become demoralised so that they will do nothing to help themselves.



III

TO WHIPPERS-IN



III. TO WHIPPERS-IN

SUMMER EXERCISE AND BREAKING YOUNG HOUNDS

OF course, during the first few weeks of horse exercise, no young hound should be allowed to break away at all, or the whole entry will soon become wild and demoralised.

Later on, if a hare gets up, or any other temptation to riot arises, the hounds should be allowed a good look at the cause of it without anyone saying a word. The steady hounds, when they see what it is, will do nothing, but if one of the wilder

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customers wants to have his fling, let him go for at least two hundred yards, as long as he gets through no fence over which you cannot follow him, and then ride quietly and quickly to his head, and let him have it as hot as you can. When he has felt the lash then, and not till then, rate him soundly and frighten him back to the huntsman.

If you ride after a riotous hound, holloaing at him from behind, you not only destroy your chance of hitting him, but will, by your ill-judged noise, as often as not make some of the others join him. Similarly, in the hunting season, when the pack is being cast, and a young hound starts after a hare, the quieter you are,

TO WHIPPERS-IN

and everyone else is, the better. Get to the offender and punish him severely if you possibly can, but do not begin holloaing at him, and thereby causing the rest of the pack to get their heads up. It is far from an easy thing to hit a hound when he is running riot, and it is an accomplishment that few whippers-in, in these days, seem to possess; but remember, the less noise you make before you get to him, the better chance you have, and above all never be tempted to revenge yourself, by hitting him at some future time when he is doing no harm.

If a hound hangs back in covert after it has been drawn blank, ride in and give him a hiding if you can, but never hit one

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and cut him off from the huntsman after he is outside. Hounds that habitually hang back in covert should be drafted speedily.

Always be attentive when the pack is travelling along a road to prevent their picking up anything, and always be ready to open the gates in turn.

DRAWING AND RUNNING IN COVERT

Remember that the moment the hounds throw off you are as much on duty as a sentinel at a Royal Palace, and if any of the field is foolish enough to try and engage you in a conversation you should respectfully, but firmly, decline to have your attention taken off the hounds. Always

TO WHIPPERS-IN

remember that the Master is your master, and not "the field" or any member of it. I have actually seen a whipper-in standing in a ride, in a wood, where we had a beaten fox before us, and where there were several fresh foxes, waiting while one of the field fumbled for some time in his pockets, to find a sovereign for him, I suppose.

When a large covert, where there are plenty of foxes, is being drawn up wind, which should always be done if possible, the whippers-in should both keep near the hounds, about level with the leading ones and a bit wide, one on each side of the pack, and should not ride on to view a fox. You will get no credit from the huntsman for holloaing a fox a quarter of a mile off

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when the pack have unkennelled a brace and are on the point of dividing close to him. I have more than once seen a whipper-in get so far up wind of the pack that the latter have found a fox and turned short back down wind, and he has gone riding on and known nothing about it. Besides, it is far better for hounds to find their fox for themselves than that they should be holloaed to him over a ride, and they should always be allowed to do so in the cub-hunting months. The case is altered later on in the season, and if a woodland is drawn down wind, or there is no wind at all, or if foxes are very scarce, or the covert is very thin. In most of these cases one whipper-in should keep well ahead of

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the huntsman, or the best, or perhaps the only, fox may slip off without being seen, and get a long start. There is a vast difference between up and down wind, and thick and thin covert, yet some whippers-in never seem to understand this.

Wherever you are, as soon as you hear the hounds find, and your huntsman cheer them, get to them as soon as you can, and take a ride parallel to that along which the huntsman is riding, so that you may have the pack between you and him; do your best to maintain to his horn and holloa, and prevent the pack from dividing. If they cross a ride into another quarter let him know at once. Stick to your hounds and never mind the foxes.

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In cub-hunting when your orders are to head the fox back, be careful to stand well out from the covert, keep your eyes, as the American saying is, skinned, and crack your whip and holloa at the fox the moment he shows his face ; it will be too late to do so if he gets twenty or thirty yards away before you see him. When you have turned him back, let the huntsman know by holloaing “Tally-ho-back !”

If you are in a ride which you have been told to prevent a fox from crossing, a little judicious use of your voice may help to do what is wanted, and will do no harm, as long as the pack are running with a good cry ; but the instant they throw up, shut your mouth and tap your

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saddle, or you will get their heads up at the very moment when every hound should have his down looking for his fox. Nothing is more irritating to a huntsman than to have the attention of his hounds taken off at this critical moment by a whipper-in halloaing “Loo-Loo!” just when he ought to be perfectly quiet.

In watching a ride or looking out for a view anywhere, never take your eyes or your attention off for a moment. If you do, the fox will surely cross at that very instant, and you will look an idiot if you tell the huntsman the fox has not crossed or gone your way, and the pack come and take the scent up with a good cry. When the hunted fox crosses be sure you

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holloa “Tally-ho-over!” and if he turns back “Tally-ho-back!”

You will do more harm than good by turning a fox back in a wood unless he is almost done, as hounds will run him better on fresh ground, and if he keeps straight on. But when he is beaten he should be kept back in one quarter if possible. This should always be done, both in cub-hunting and regular hunting; also if there are many fresh foxes in the covert, so as to avoid changing on to one of them.

BREAKING COVERT IN REGULAR HUNTING

Where your object is to view the fox away, stand close to the covert, and in a

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position where you can see as far along the side of it and over as much country as possible; let the fox get right well away, a good field, at least, and then holloa "Forward away!" as loud as you like. Watch him as far as you can, and observe, at all events, where he went through the first fence. If he goes away a long distance from you, do not ride up to the place where he broke and begin holloaing down wind, where no one can hear you, but rather turn back towards the huntsman so as to make certain of being heard.

Similarly, if you hear a holloa that the huntsman cannot, do not ride on to the person who is halloaing, for if you do the huntsman will be no more able to hear you

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than him. Turn back towards the huntsman and pass the holloa on to him.

Never ride after the fox or on his line at all. Should the fox show himself and turn back, keep perfectly quiet, and he will probably go away directly. If, however, the day is a very bad scenting one, and the huntsman is evidently going to draw over his fox, you must let him know in some way or other that there is a fox in the covert. When the fox is away, and the huntsman is coming up with the pack, ride close up to him and tell him quietly what has happened, and how far you saw the fox.

Always remember that the whipper-in who gets most credit from the huntsman is he who makes the latter's task the easiest.

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If one or two couples of hounds come out on the line of the fox ahead of the rest, it is your duty to stop them at all hazards. If they get two or three fields' start in a stiff country they will spoil any run, however good the scent. This is especially the case on a wild windy day, when the fox has started down wind. On days of this sort, and indeed on a good many others, it is better for the huntsman to blow his hounds out of covert at a place where the fox has not gone away, and lay them on in a body afterwards. One minute judiciously spent in giving every hound a fair start will be saved over and over again in the course of the run.

When the hounds are away it is usual for the first whipper-in to go on with them, and

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for the second to stay and see them all away; but if the second whipper-in holloas the fox away, and the first is a good way back, the former should go on with the huntsman till the latter comes up, when the second whipper-in can fall back and save his horse, which may have to carry him all day.

When you are bringing up the tail hounds, and you are near the body of the pack, be careful not to make any noise, or you will infallibly get the leading hounds' heads up should they happen to be at fault. If the latter are running hard those with you will soon leave you and join them.

HUNTING A FOX IN THE OPEN

When you have to turn hounds remember

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that you cannot do so unless you get to their heads. Very often one sees a huntsman blowing his horn, an unjumpable fence between him and the pack, and the whipper-in on the same side of the fence as the huntsman rating and holloaing at the hounds. He is really doing his best to drive them still farther from the huntsman and increasing his difficulties. No huntsman who knows anything of his business will be angry with you for not being at the heads of the hounds on all occasions, as it is often a physical impossibility for you to be so; but he will be angry, and rightly so, if, just to show you are somewhere near, and are doing something, you get between him and the pack and rate them farther away from him. Similarly,

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when he is blowing them away from a covert after a fox, get to them and rate them on if you can, but if that is impossible, do the next best thing and hold your tongue.

When the pack are running riot or heel, and you go to stop them, take a look at the fences and gates before you start, and make up your mind exactly where you will get to their heads, and do not ride crossways at the middle of the pack only to cross the line behind them just as the tail hounds are going through a fence.

In the open when you have turned the hounds, which, if you get to their heads, is done with a word, your work is finished for the moment ; on no account ride after them

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cracking your whip and rating them, or you will very likely drive them clean over the line of scent, and on a bad scenting day are nearly sure to do so. Your best plan is to canter back towards the huntsman so as to be ready to help him to prevent any of the hounds from taking up the line heel way. This stupid bungle is generally the huntsman's own fault, as he ought to cast his hounds in front of him ; but sometimes on windy days, when the fox has gone straight down wind, it is a little difficult to prevent it. When you are sent on to obtain information from someone who has seen the fox, find out as quickly as you can all he has to tell you and then take off your cap, and point out the fox's line. If you point with

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your hand only it is almost impossible to see it from a distance.

When the pack run into a covert of moderate size the first whipper-in should watch which side the huntsman goes, and should ride along the other, taking care to keep as nearly opposite him as possible. The second whipper-in, especially if the hounds are running up wind, or have a tired fox before them, should hang back till he is quite certain they are "forward away" on the line. If they are running with even a moderate scent, the whippers-in will do more good by acting in this way than by galloping on to the end for a view, as they will run no risk of heading the fox and perhaps spoiling the run of the season. If the fox keeps straight on the

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hounds will run him if there is any scent at all, but he will very likely be lost if the whole establishment goes forward and he lies down and slips back without being seen.

Some huntsmen, on nearing a small covert, are fond of catching hold of their hounds, and holding them forward so as to hit the fox's line if he has gone through. If this is done it is an absolute necessity that one of the whippers-in should hang back till the line has been hit off. If the covert is a large one, the huntsman will, of course, go in with his hounds, and the first whipper-in should take a ride parallel to him, so that they may have the hounds between them. If the hounds are running down wind the second whipper-in may with advantage get on to the far end,

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but if it is up wind or the fox is tired, he will do better to keep a quarter behind the huntsman, as in these cases the fox is sure to turn back before he has gone far, and if he does not the hounds will soon run into him without help.

A hunted fox is a most difficult thing to be certain about, and at times even the most experienced will be deceived. A fox that is very tired indeed will at times, and especially if he is being hallooed at, look and move exactly like a fresh one; but if you are lucky enough to get a good view of him without his seeing you, you can generally tell. If you are a good way ahead of the hounds, and the hunted fox comes up to you and lies down, and you hear the

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pack hunting up to him, let him lie ; watch him, but do not say a word. Every minute he lies there is bringing his enemies nearer to him, and making his death more certain. Of course, if the hounds are manifestly at fault, or have changed on to a fresh fox, you must attract the huntsman's attention somehow. In the open this can generally be done by holding up your cap without moving the fox ; in covert you will probably be obliged to give him a holloa, but you must not do so till other means have failed.

Lastly, save your horses as much as you can consistently with doing your work, and save them before they are tired ; it is too late to do so afterwards. Always choose the best and soundest going you can. Jump no

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large fence when a small one or a gate will land you as near the hounds.

Try and keep up your zeal and attention all day, and be as keen in the evening as in the morning ; and as long as the huntsman thinks it worth while to persevere after his fox do you persevere too, and do your level best to help to end the day with a kill, however hopeless such a result may at times appear.

Always be neat and tidy, and take a pride in cleaning your hunting things well and putting them on smartly.

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